



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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**State Transportation Crews Prepare to Respond to State's First Snow Season
during COVID pandemic**

Gov. Andy Beshear Calls on Kentuckians to Keep Each Other Safe This Snow and Ice Season

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 2, 2020) – Chilly early November temperatures signal the fast approaching winter months – primetime for the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's (KYTC) snow and ice removal efforts. Nearly 2,000 frontline crews charged with maintaining safe travel on state routes will face the first snow and ice season during a health pandemic and Gov. Andy Beshear calls upon TEAM Kentucky to keep fellow Kentuckians safe on and off the roads.

"KYTC road crews are fellow Kentuckians committed to serving all of us when the elements are at their worst," said Gov. Beshear. "We all have to do our part to be good neighbors by following health guidance like wearing masks and social distancing to protect the men and women we're counting on for essential services – like clearing snow – to keep us connected. We also have a role to play to help crews do their jobs efficiently whenever we're behind the wheel."

KYTC snowfighters have been trained, salt and road treatment supplies restocked statewide, 1,024 plow trucks serviced and contingency plans are in place– all part of the state's preparedness plan to respond to winter weather. This year, the cabinet's proactive planning has had to take into account the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, which to date has killed more than 1,400 Kentuckians and has the potential for sidelining entire work crews.

"Snow and ice preparations begin long before the winter months and this year has been unique with a health crisis in play," said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. "We've done our best to see around the corner by planning how to keep our work crews as protected as possible from COVID, and also how to adapt plans to cover for crews that suddenly have to be taken out of rotation because of COVID."

"We ask Kentuckians to partner with us by paying attention to weather advisories, limiting trips during poor weather conditions, and showing our crews grace as we make necessary adjustments brought on by the pandemic. This is uncharted territory and we will get through this together," Secretary Gray said.

A statewide brigade of trucks and plows is ready for deployment before, during and after winter weather events, and a strike force of four plows is positioned for statewide deployment from Frankfort during major winter weather events. The Cabinet is stocked with a supply of 375,000 tons of salt, 1.1 million gallons of brine for anti-icing efforts and 1 million gallons of calcium chloride, an additive to salt for deicing.

KYTC uses a three-tier system to prioritize treatment and snow clearing on state-maintained routes. Route designations are based on factors, such as traffic volume and connectivity to critical services, like hospitals. During routine snow and ice events, crews operate using snow and ice priority route maps for maximum efficiency of equipment and materials usage. For severe winter storm events, the Cabinet has established a snow emergency plan to deploy resources within each county as needed to cover highest priority routes.

“Keeping Kentuckians connected to what matters most is a core value,” said State Highway Engineer James Ballinger. “Increased sanitation requirements during work shifts and the potential for COVID to impact our workforce may result in delays to treat all state routes. If conditions demand, we will focus on shifting resources to ensure traffic can move safely on key routes, like those that provide Kentuckians access to life-saving services and maintain cross-county travel.”

Crews will follow healthy at work guidelines and maintenance facilities are closed to the public to minimize exposure. KYTC maintains the majority of roads, streets and bridges that are part of the State Highway System. Examples include interstates, parkways and U.S. route designations.

Keep Kentucky Moving Safely

Safe roadways are a shared responsibility, especially during inclement weather when risks increase. KYTC encourages motorists to prepare for winter and remain safe by following these tips:

- Travel only as necessary during major snow events. Stock vehicles with ice scrapers, jumper cables, blankets, a flashlight, cell phone charger, non-perishable snacks and first aid kit should you get stranded on the road.
- Winterize vehicles. Have your car battery, tire pressure and brakes checked. Make sure your heater, defroster, headlights and windshield wipers are working properly.
- When snow and/or ice are on roadways, drive slowly no matter what type of vehicle you're in. It takes more time and distance to stop your vehicle in poor weather conditions, so brake early and slowly.
- Pay attention to weather advisories and allow more time to travel for routine commutes.
- Slow down when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges or shaded areas. These are all candidates for developing black ice—a thin coating of clear ice that can form on the pavement surface that may be difficult to see.
- Maintain a safe distance from snowplows and other heavy highway equipment and do not pass snowplows on the shoulder.
- Know before you go. Download the free WAZE app or visit goky.ky.gov to check traffic conditions before you travel. The map also offers access to select traffic cameras on interstates and parkways.
- Eliminate distractions while driving (e.g. using phone and eating).

- Throughout the winter season, KYTC will be highlighting the men and women across the state who serve on the frontlines and behind the scenes of the Cabinet's snow and ice removal efforts. Follow @KYTC and like us on facebook.com/kytc120. Click [here](#) to follow your local KYTC Department of Highways district office on Twitter and Facebook for regional transportation updates. The Cabinet's snow and ice information website, snowky.ky.gov, provides details about priority routes, helpful winter weather tips, fact sheets and videos on salt application and snow removal.

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Editor's Note: Click [here](#) to view video message from KYTC Secretary Jim Gray

